E.1189. 3 104

PRECEPTS FOR Christian Practice:

Or the Rule of the new CREATVRE,

Containing Duties to bee daily observed by every Beleever.

The second Edition, Corrected, Inlarged, and now Publiſhed according to Order.

Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, Peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Iſrael of God.*

LONDON,
Printed by *Rich. Cotes* for *John Bellamie*, and are to be ſold at his Shop at the three *Golden Lyons* in *Cornehill*, neere the *Royall Exchange*, 1645.

Jan. 31 1644

BRITISH MUSEUM

Precepts for Christian practice, or the Rule of the new CREATURE.

Dutie 1.

1. BE alwayes sensible of thy originall corruption, and consider how it inclineth thee continually to all evill, and indisposeth thee to any good; groane under it, and bewaile it, as *Paul* did, *Rom.*7.24.

Also take speciall notice of your actuall sins, or daily infirmities, in thought, word, deed. Indeavour to make your peace with God for them before you go to bed: which must bee done these foure waies.

1. By repenting and confessing your sinnes to God, working your heart to griefe and sorrow for them, by some such melting considerations as these. First, of Gods goodnesse to you.

2. Of the unreasonablenesse and every way unprofitablenesse of sin. 3. Of the great prejudice and damage that commeth to the soule by sinne. *John*, 1.1,9.

2. By beleeving, and casting your self wholly

ly on Christs righteousnesse for remission of sinne, and for reconciliation with God, *Rom.* 3.22,24,25.

3. By cleaving to Gods promises of pardon, and peace, *Isaiah*, 43.25. *Rom.* 5.1.

4. By waiting till the Lord shall speake to you, *Psal.* 85.8.

Dutie 2.

Get your union with Christ, and interest in Christ cleered and confirmed to you daily more and more, that you are a branch in his vine, and a member in his body, 2 *Cor.* 13.5. This may be done three wayes.

1. By daily renewall of your faith in Christ, especially of that act of faith, whereby the soule knits, or tyes it selfe unto Christ, casts, or roules it selfe on Christ for salvation. Cause your heart in a solemne manner every day to act this part, or to put forth this primitive act of faith in the view of the whole soule. The daily exercise hereof will increase, & strengthen the divine habit of faith in the soule, and make the soule sensible of the very act of it. By frequent beleeving you shall feele at your very heart, that you do beleeve; so shall you have a witnesse in your selfe, that you are in Christ, 1 *Joh.* 5.10.

2. By examining your heart upon what grounds you take Christ to be yours. The grounds are these five; 1. A sight and sense of

of

of your ſins, as of the guilt, power, and puniſhment of them, and of your miſery by them, *Mat.* 9. 13. 2. Your want of Chriſt ſeene, and felt at your very heart, to juſtifie, ſanctifie, redeeme, and ſave you, elſe you are utterly loſt, and undone everlaſtingly, *Luke* 19. 10. 3. *Gods* free and generall offer of Chriſt to any that will take him by faith, *John* 3. 16. there are manifold promiſes to this purpoſe: And the grounds of all Gods offers and donations of Chriſt to the poore ſoule are free grace, rich mercy, undeſerved love, *Epheſ.* 2. 4, 5, 7. *Tit.* 3. 4, 5, 6. 4 Chriſts ſweet and gracious invitation of ſuch to come to him as are weary of ſin, *Matth.* 11. 28. to buy, as have no money, *Iſaiah* 55. 1. no worth, or deſert in themſelves. 5. As ſinfull vile wretches as you are, have been ſought of Chriſt, and found in Chriſt, as 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Paul* was a blaſphemer, perſecuter, and yet obtained mercy, and therfore why may not you? Thus the more clee ely you diſcerne upon what grounds you take Chriſt, the more cleare is your title to Chriſt, evinced to your owne ſoule.

3. By ſurveying and obſerving in what manner you take Chriſt daily. Which is, whether, Firſt, you do wholly renounce all opinion and conceit of your owne righteouſneſſe and deſert, *Mark* 8. 34. *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. ſo that

you come to Christ empty of your selfe, very vile, yea, nothing in your owne eyes, unworthy to receive him.

2. Whether you lay hold on Christ alone with an empty hand of faith, joyning nothing at all with Christ in the matter of salvation; as the holy Martyr at the stake cried out, *None but Christ, None but Christ.*

3. Whether you find the Father drawing your heart after Christ, *Joh.* 6. 44. which is in hungring and panting desires, that will never be satisfied without him; so that the streame, both of your Judgement, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. and affections run towards him, 1*Cor.* 2. 2. *Gal.* 6. 14.

4. Whether you take Christ as a Lord to rule you, as well as a Jesus to save you, *Col.* 2. 6. As one that is all in all to you, your wisdome, your righteousnesse, your sanctification and redemption, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. your spirituall food, *John* 6. 48. your Rayment, *Rom.* 13. 14. your Strength, *Phil.* 4. 13. your life, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Col.* 3. 3.

5. Whether you seeke and waite for Christ, (out of the sense of your spirituall want and penury) in every ordinance publike and private, Word, Sacraments, Prayer, Meditation, Conference; not as they are your owne works of sanctification, but as they are Gods Ordinances appointed of purpose for the manifestation & communication of Christ to the soule.

Fre-

Frequent peruſall hereof will cleare to you your manner of taking Chriſt, and that will evidence to you your right and title which you have in Chriſt Jeſus.

Dutie 3.

Labour to draw and derive from Chriſt (by the powerfull attractive force of faith) ſpirituall ability ſufficient for the day.

1. To performe all your duties, *Phil.*4.13.

2. To exerciſe all your graces, 2 *Cor.*3.5.

3. To reſiſt and overcome all your tentations and corruptions, *Rom.*8.37.

4. To undergoe all your trials, and afflictions thereof, *John* 1.16.

Make your proviſion of grace and ſtrength from Chriſt every morning, fetch from him ſo much as you ſhall have occaſion to uſe all day long; yea, and upon all occaſions that fall out in the day, goe to Chriſt ſtill for the wiſdome that muſt direct you, for the holineſſe that muſt character you, for the ſhoulder which muſt beare your croſſes, for that ſtrength that muſt reſiſt your tentations, and for abilitie to perform all duties as duties.

To this end act your faith daily in the promiſes of grace, and ſtrength, as *John* 1.16. *Ezek.* 36.26, 27. *Iſaiah* 44.3. *Zech.* 10.12. theſe and the like promiſes are ſecurity given you by God, that you ſhall receive grace in the uſe of the ordinances, which are as the conduit-pipes

or instruments of conveying the same from Christ unto you.

This is the way and meanes to doe all in the strength of Christ, and to take forth a great deale of Christ into your soule, that not you, but Christ may live in you, *Gal.*2.20.

Dutie 4.

Perform daily duties both in family, & closet (especially these three, of Prayer, Meditation, Reading) and doe them with serious intention, heate of affection, diligence and delight, *Jerem.* 48. 10. *Mal.*1. 14. 1 *Chron.* 21. 24. To this end,

1. Watch to these duties, keepe the heart in a good frame for them, undefiled with sin, untainted by the world, *Ephes.*6.18.

2. Take the fittest time for the performance of them all; when you are least dull and sluggish. Begin the day constantly with thoughts of God, *Psal.* 57. 7,8,9.

3. Bee very reall, serious, and substantiall with God in them, indeavour to feele all duties at your heart, inliving, inlarging, inflaming your affections.

These be the duties of most importance and consequent, commoditie and comfort to the soule, because they properly aim at, and reach to soules good, and celestiall happinesse, to train up a soule for heaven, *Deut.*4. 29.

Dutie 5.

Fortifie your selves every morning against your

your ſpeciall luſts to which you are by nature moſt prone, or ſhall bee moſt tempted, bee it pride, paſſion, covetouſneſſe, &c.

This is done, 1. by Arguments and holy reaſonings within your ſelves, drawn from the ſad effects thereof, as diſprofit, diſcomfort, diſgrace, or the like, to diſcover the unreaſonableneſſe of your ſins, and make your ſoule aſhamed of them. For example, ſhall I bee proud? then I am ſure to fall, for pride goeth before deſtruction, and a haughty ſpirit before a fall, *Prov.* 16. 18. and God will count me for his enemy, for God reſiſteth the proud, *Jam.* 4. 6. Shall I be angry? if I let paſſion in, I cannot keepe Satan out, *Epheſ.* 4, 26, 27. Againe, I ſhall grieve the holy Spirit of God, *Epheſ.* 4. 30, 31. Shall I bee covetous? I cannot but bee very ſinfull, ſith the love of money is the root of all evill, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10.

2. By pondering in your mind upon the precepts in Gods booke againſt your ſins, *Prov.* 6. 23. 24. And on the judgments threatned or inflicted for them; as on proud *Herod*, *Acts* 12. 23. voluptuous *Dives*, *Luk.* 16. 23. churliſh *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 38.

3. By applying promiſes of mortification cloſe to your hearts, as a plaiſter to the ſore, for ſubduing your iniquities, *Mic.* 7. 19. *Rom.* 6. 14.

4. By drawing vertue from Chriſts death into the ſoule, which hath in it a killing force

of

of sin, *Rom.*6.4.5.6.*Phil.*3.10.

Dutie 6.

Get your hearts strongly fixed on God, by trusting on him, *Psal.*112.7.and submitting to him, 2.*Sam.*15.26. 1. *Sam.*3. 18. against all the feares, cares, doubts, trialls, afflictions of every day, for sufficient to the day is the evill thereof, *Mat.*6. 34. To this end,

1. Be prudent to fore-see your personall trialls, and troubles, whatsoever they are like to bee, *Pro.*22.3.

2. Goe hide, and lay up your selfe in God, run unto his name, for God is a rocke of habitation to which a poore soule may continually resort, God will give commandment to save him, *Psal.*71.3. 1 *Peter.*4.19.

3. Especially commit that very thing to God, put into his hands, whatsoever you desire to keepe, or feare to lose, 2.*Tim.*1.12.be it life, libertie, name, friends, maintenance, &c. What you would have resolved, if it be a doubt, *Psal.* 37.5.Or supplied, if it bee a want, *Prov.*16.7.Or removed, if it bee a crosse, *Psal.*50. 5. And together with the thing, cast all your care, feare, sorrow, and trouble of minde about it wholly on the Lord, *Mat.*6.31. 1*Pet.*5.7.*Psal.*55.22.

4. Renew your faith in those promises every day which most concern your present estate; as in promises, 1 Of supplies, if you bee in want, *Psal.* 34.8. & 37.3. & 84.11.*Mat.*6.30.2 Of protection

rection, if you be in danger, *Pſal.* 34.7. 3 Of direction, if in doubt, *Jam.* 1.5. 4 Of deliverance if in trouble, *Job.* 5.19. 5 Of a good end, and ſanctified uſe of all. *Deut.* 8. 1. *Jam.* 5.11. *Rom.* 8.28. *Heb.* 12.10.

5. Labour to ſee Gods hand, *Pſal.* 39. 9. beleeve his love, *Heb.* 12.6. *Rev.* 3.19. and with all meekeneſſe, and patience to reſigne up your ſelfe wholly to his will in every affliction, *Mat.* 26.39.

Dutie 7.

Get, and keepe a ſavory reliſh continually of your chriſtian priviledges, wherewith you are inveſted as you are new creatures in Chriſt: to wit,

1. Of your dignity, that you are Gods ſons, 1 *Joh.* 3.1,2. Chriſts brethren, *Heb.* 2.11. heavens heires, *James.* 2.5. partakers of a high, and heavenly calling, *Heb.* 3.1.

2. Of your liberty, that your are the Lords freemen, *Cor.* 7.22. delivered out of the hands of all your enemies, 1 *Sam.* 12.11. 2 *Kings.* 17.39.

3. Of your victory, that you are through Chriſt more then Conquerors over all the world of Creatures, 1 *John.* 5.4. of evils, of temptations, of perſecutions, *Rom.* 8.35.37.

4. Of your ſafety, that you have almighty God for your place of refuge, *Pſal.* 48. 2. a hedge of providence, *Job.* 1.10. a Guard of angels, *Pſal.* 91.11. an incloſure of mercy, *Pſal.* 32. 10. and

10. and Gods promise as a writ of protectio for your defence. *Heb.* 13. 5. 6.

5. Of your riches as durable substance heaven, *Heb.* 10. 34. an incorruptible inhe tance, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. a kingdome of glory, and crowne of life, for you are heires of God, a co-heires with Christ.

6. Of your joy and pleasure, precious s kind, and plentifull for measure, *Psal.* 16. peace un-conceiveable, *Phil.* 4. 7. joy unspeak able, 1. *Pet.* 1. 8. the matters joy.

Get your hearts affected with all these as being yours. Chew, and sucke them by serious Meditation, worke, and warme them on you hearts by close application, rubbing them into your affections. Oppose these your spirituall priviledges to all your temporall pressures, setting the one against the other; as your heavenly friends to your earthly foes, your high dignity in *Christ* to your meanes in outward condition, your wealth above to your want below your future joys and rest to your present troubles, and sorrows. This will make you not onely patient under the afflictions of this life, *Rom.* 12. 12. but also joyful in them, *Rom.* 5. 3. & triumphant over them, 1. *Cor.* 15. 55. Thus did the Apostle, *Rom* 8. 18. 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. & 6. 8. 9. 10.

These will provoke to duty, 1 *Peter.* 2. 9. 11. 12. and preserve from fainting, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. 17. and from trouble of heart, *John.* 14. 1, 2.

Duties

Dutie 8.

Sanctifie God in your heart daily, 1 *Pet.* 1.15. make him your feare, *Isaiah.* 8. 14. your love, & delights, *Psal.* 37.4. To this end,

1. Have often high, and honorable thoughts of God, serious meditations of his glorious Attributes, as his wisdome, power, truth, mercy, Justice, &c. and work them upon your hearts, that they may Eccho to them with pure, and melting affections. This will increase, and nourish up the divine nature in you, 2 *Pet.* 1.4.

2. Labour to bee affected with all the workes of God, as first to behold, and admire the wisdome of God in the creatures, *Psal.* 136. 5. 2 To see, and tast Gods goodnes in every mercy *Psal.* 34.8. 3 To take notice of, and tremble at the anger, and displeasure of God in all his Judgements, *Psal.* 119. 120. *Habb.* 3. 16. 4 That you may answer the dispensations of Gods providence with suitable dispositions, your hearts carrying a counterpane in affection to all Gods actions, *Isay.* 26.8.

3. Wrestle with God by praying, and beseeving for an heart of flesh, *Ezek.* 36.26. which will receive impressions from the very thoughts of God in the mind.

4 Apply promises of particular affections: as first of love, *Deut.* 30.6. 2 of feare, *Ier.* 32.40. 3 of delight, *Isa.* 58.14. There is heat, and life in the promises, sufficient to quicken and warm thy dead, and frozen affections.

Dutie

Dutie 9.

Get a publike spirit to mind the things of Jesus Christ, as naturally as if they were your own things, *Phil.* 2. 20, 21. to looke on the things of others, and preferre, first, Jerusalems welfare before your chiefest joy, *Psal.* 137. 5, 6. and 2. the Gospels liberty before your own, as *Paul* did, and to mourn for the sins of the times, as the Godly in Jerusalem did, *Ezek.* 9. 4. Especially lay to heart,

1. The Churches misery, when Gods Ordinances goe downe, and superstition goeth up, when Gods cause and side are put to the worst, when any thing falls out, which gives a blow to Religion, or proves an impediment to the Gospel. If the Arke bee taken, call your comforts Ichabods, 1 *Sam.* 4. 2.

2. The afflictions of *Joseph*, *Amos* 6. 6. The sufferings of Gods servants, whether Ministers or people. O sympathize with them, *Heb.* 13. 3. *Neh.* 1. 4. labour to feel their troubles & sorrows at your very hearts; and pray earnestly for them as the Church did for *Peter*, *Act.* 12. 5.

3. The signes of the times, *Mat.* 16. 3. which hypocrites cannot discerne, though they be well versed in the face of the Skie, to wit, the sad symptomes, and presages of approaching Judgements, as, First, the commonnesse of sin; for all sorts transgresse in all kind of open sinfulnes with a high hand against the light of nature

ture, and the meanes of grace, *Ezek.* 12.3. 2 Contempt of Gods Ordinances, misusing of his Ministers, 2 *Chron.*36. 16. 3 Departure of Gods glory from his house, *Ezek.* 9. 3. 4 Incorrigiblenesse after former, and under present judgements, *Lev.*26. 14. to the end of the chapter. 5 The death of many righteous men, *Isaiah* 57. 1. the carrying away of others to hiding places. 6 The vials of Gods wrath powred on the Churches beyond the Seas, *Ier.* 17. 12. 14. 7 An inundation of spirituall judgements, as a spirit of errour, superstition, apostasie, &c. which do commonly end in temporall plagues, *Isa.*6.10,11.

Now the Holy ghost is a publike spirit breathing and acting in all the members of the mysticall body of Christ: Pray for it, *Luke* 11.13. beleeve for it, *Gal.* 3. 14. *Ezek.* 36.37.

Dutie 10.

Get your hearts weaned daily from the world, and from those creatures and comforts in it, which are deerest and sweetest to you. As wife, children, friends, goods, liberty house, life. This Christ requires of those that follow him, *Luke* 14. 26,27. *Mark* 10. 29,30. this will prepare you either to suffer or to die when God cals you to it. To this end consider seriously;

1. That these things cannot satisfie your heart, when you have enjoyed them to the full, *Eccles.* 4. 8. & 5. 10. you soone grow weary of them, or glutted with them, so that you

you desire some new delights, or more of the old, or some over againe.

2. Nor can they sanctifie you, but expose you oft to many lusts, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9, 10. tentations, distractions, to a spirit of the world, and they hinder from following Christ, *Mat.* 19. 22.

3. Nor can they save you from Gods wrath, from death or judgement, *Prov.* 11. 4.

4. The wicked whose portion is onely here, have often the greatest share of them, *Psal.* 17. 14. *Job* 21. 7. to 14

5. They serve onely for this life, whilst wee are on this side of the grave; they shall not be the least Ingredients into our celestiall happines. When we do come to be happy in heaven, wee shall stand in no need of food, rayment, physick, marriage, &c. *Mat.* 22. 30. for we shall be like the Angels of God in heaven, we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, *Rev.* 7. 16. we shall live by the al-sufficient Spirit of God, which never needs refreshing; we shall be clothed with long white robes of immortality *Rev.* 7. 9. In a word, when wee come to heaven the place of Gods Habitation, wee shall enjoy the face, and beatificall presence of the most glorious Jehovah, blessed for ever, as an object, wherein all the powers of our soules will be satisfied with ineffable delight, and everlastingnesse. God will be unto us all in all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 28.

FINIS.

A CALCVLATION for this present yeer, 1645.

Not only according to the *English* and *Beyond-Sea Accounts*, but also according to the Word of God.

Herein besides usuall matters, you have these

Particulars:

1. The *Occasion* of this Book, with the *Names* and *Order* of *Moneths* and *Dayes* used in the *Word*: with some memorable Accidents in each Moneth. pag. 2, 3. to 28.
2. A *Chronologie* from the Creation to Christs death, proved from the Scriptures. pag 28.
3. How many *Generations* from *Adam* to *Christ*, and thence to us, by computation. p. 29.
4. Of *Eight Named* in the Word before they were. p. 29
5. The *Inventors* or *First* in severall Arts or Actions, shewed from the Word. pag. 30.
6. A *Catalogue* of what *severall Nations* our Kings have sprung, that have successively reigned in this Kingdom before the *Normans*: with the Names of the Kings since that last Conquest. pag. 31.
7. The Excellency and *Honour of England*.
8. The severall *Types of the 4. Monarchies*, (opening a great part of *Daniels* 2. 7. and 8. Chapters.) And of the Fifth, succeeding and far surpassing them all. pag. 32.

By *H. J.* Minister of the Gospell.

Gen. 26. 18. *Isaac called their Names, after the Names by which his Father had called them.*

London printed by *M. Bell* for the Company of Stationers.